government permanent. It would be easy for an outsider to 638
consolidate this situation, and this could not be for from
true, for the Kiowa do the same themselves. The chieftain 633.
is the successor of a peacock's tassle, a formidable
warrior, commanding in vengeance, generous in hospitality,
and gallant in conduct. An aristocratic youth is educated
to play this part. It would be difficult to find many
peoples among whom the hero, as defined, has so extensive
a duty role and so general and attractive an audience. A
number of persons in the Kwahadie area, queried on this
point, were unable to name more than one or two chieftains
of the aristocratic group, perhaps ten or three hundred
men in all, who had not been imprisoned or exiled by the
government at least once.

Safeguard, as in the case of revenge, is a matter 494
of aristocratic honor. Formerly, anyone who wished to pass 579
through a chieftain's territory was expected to put him-
self under the latter's protection, because, failing this,
he became more or less fair game for bandits or, indeed,
the chieftain himself. In past decades brigandage, like
cattle-stealing, was something of a sport, and holding up a
traveler was considered as amusing, as well as lucrative,
occupation for the aristocracy. The luckless merchant could
only apply to the chieftain for his goods which, in con-
sideration of a fee, were "recovered" and returned to him.
The easiest technique, of course, was to obtain right to
passage at first, at the expense of a few gifts, and a
number of the chieftain's men would be delegated as guards.

for the Kurds themselves, safeguard had a more important application. If a man was a member of a group engaged in a vendetta, and had to pass through dangerous territory, he could put himself under the protection of a neutral group whose men provided him with an escort and, should he be killed, was obligated to avenge his death just as if he had been one of its own. 484 579 629

Sanctuary is something of major importance among the Kurds. If a man had committed a crime, usually a murder, he could throw himself on the mercy of the nearest chieftain and the latter was bound by honor to protect him from his pursuers. Often the chieftain paid the badalkhwin or blood-money to the injured parties, although unrelated to them or to the criminal, as a generous gesture. Of greater interest, perhaps, the chieftain provided sanctuary for runaway lovers. If a youth and a maiden fell in love and their parents forbade the match, they sometimes fled together, and, if captured by their irate relatives, would be slain. It is said that the first thing for such fugitives to do is to have intercourse, so they cannot be separated except by death, for a woman who has lost her virginity out of wedlock must be killed by her kinsmen. If the pair were able to reach a chieftain, the latter now acted as a matchmaker. He sought out the parents of the girl, informed them that their daughter was under his protection, attempted to reconcile them to the marriage, by this time consummated, and often paid the dowry of the bride, again, as a matter 69% 628 622 [583] 628 584 622 [484]

day a larger pot from this neighbor, and each time returned one still larger. Finally, as had been his original intention, Abu Nuwas borrowed his neighbor's largest vessel, one of the greatest value because it was large enough to feed a company of soldiers. This he failed to return, keeping it with the intention of selling it. After several days, the neighbor called Abu Nuwas, and inquired greedily if the great vessel had given birth. "God remains," sighed Abu Nuwas piously, "the pot is dead." "What!" shouted the enraged neighbor, "How can a pot die?" Abu Nuwas placed his arm gently on the other's arm and said, "Think carefully what the judge will say to this after you have accepted the offspring of so many pots. How can a pot give birth?" 539

The elder women also tell the children folktales of various types, but it was not possible to record any of them in detail. The townsmen make little use of the nadi or "club" of the officials and officers, nor are they interested in alcoholic beverages or gambling. A few, while on a journey in Baghdad, Erbil, or Mosul, may be attracted by the cabarets or the houses of prostitution, but these occasions are rare and there are no such institutions in the town or the Rowandus district. 538 517 [529] [484] [347] [548]

In masculine conversation, politics, both domestic and international, overshadow any other intellectual topic, and, as might be expected, are strongly coloured by Kurdish nationalism. It is unusual to find a group of Kurds discussing matters of philosophy, science, religion, or the like, and such things find a very small part in current interest. The Kurd, it might be said, is not particularly concerned whether the earth is round or flat, but will hold forth on contemporary affairs in the Middle East almost interminably. Kurdish nationalism, as noted at the outset, 521 [448] [668]

each dwelling give them a small sum and pour a little water over the dolls. Another custom is to empty a basin of water on the ground after the departure of a traveler. Browne noticed this as he was leaving Tehran:

> . . . as I mounted amidst many good wishes for my journey I heard the splash of water as it was thrown after me. What the origin of this curious ceremony may be I do not know, neither did I see it practiced on any other occasion.[1]

In Rowandus, Tuesday is considered to be an unlucky day for any outstanding enterprise, such as a major business transaction or a wedding. As among many primitive groups, the parings of fingernails and hair from a comb are not to be thrown away. There is no belief that they might be used in black magic, but it is considered "best" to wrap them in a bit of paper or a rag and place the packet in a crevice. A tooth is also put in a hole of some sort in the wall of the house, "in order that no one will get a headache." Dreams are, to some extent, considered to have prophetic significance. "An angel may come in a dream," it was said, "and point out the location of buried treasure." Some of the other superstitions, for example, the significance attached to bread, have been noticed in previous sections.

In concluding this section, it is difficult, if not impossible, to assay the piety of the inhabitants of Rowandus as a whole. There are many of the townspeople who do not say five prayers daily or fast during Ramadan, and a large number of the chieftains seem to take their faith

[1]Browne, 1893, p. 174.

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

entered the institution which, so far as I could understand, hardly ranked higher than our poorhouses of former days.

The ritual fast in the month of *ramaḍān* began in 1957 on April 2nd. The thirty days during which the orthodox Muslim, whether man or woman, must refrain from eating food, solid or liquid, from tobacco, and from all sexual intercourse, from such time in the morning as it is possible to distinguish between a white and a black thread until sundown, I did not experience during my four months stay in Southern Kurdistan. Nor did I witness the concluding festival day, and the following six days, during which women who have had their menstruation period during the fast month and as a result of this condition of impurity were unable to comply with the fast, can rectify this omission.

On the other hand I did see a woman fasting on her own for a day as a result of a promise to do so[1], believing that by so doing she would bring good fortune to others. The day was July 30th, which, in 1957, corresponded to the first day in the month of pilgrimage. The fasting woman was the wife of the sheikh at Sargalu. I noticed that although she abstained from eating, drinking and smoking the whole of a long, hot day, the temperature reaching 122°F., where abstention from drinking, particularly, demanded an inhuman strength of will and self control, she attended to her domestic duties, which consisted, among other things, in milking goats, cooking and serving meals to a numerous family. Her fast was due to a promise given in connexion with the participation of a relative in a pilgrimage to Mecca, the centre and holy city of the Islamic world, a long, expensive and still risky journey.

We have now reached the 6th and last pillar of Islam, the pilgrimage, in the 12th lunar month. The Coran says in Sure 3, verse 97, that "pilgrimage to the House is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can find a way thither". Out of the four feminine environments I experienced in Kurdistan, the only women I met who had undertaken a pilgrimage came from the uneducated urban milieu. Of these there were several. In a joint family that owned various shops in the city and several large cars that were hired out, a woman, her husband and an 8 year old daughter had the year before taken part in a pilgrimage by plane: Damascus-Jidda, and two other women in the same family group had made the journey with other pilgrims.

The most complete information about the pilgrimage was obtained from two women of about the the same age who were married to the same business man in Kirkuk. Each had been a member of a group of pilgrims, one going the one year and the other the next. The one had taken a plane via Damascus to Jidda, whilst the other had gone by bus across the Syrian desert to Beirut, and then by ship through the Suez Canal to Jiddah. In the latter case the journey had taken about two months and had cost about 200 Din. (say £800)[2].

In the same way that the returned male pilgrim mark the greatest experience of their lives and their changed position in society by a white band around their headdress, so Kurdish women must observe certain sartorial rules after a pilgrimage. Even among women the head must never again be bared. The light head veil, *abyāḍ*, must be worn even in the closest family circle, where other women are allowed to dispense with it. The arm, from elbow to hand, must never be shown naked which is

788 in common with them. This great feeling of religious affinity dissipates any sense of loneliness and
791 desolation. Five times a day it is the duty of a woman to wash herself and arrange her dress, and to concentrate on something other than her monotonous labours, a right and a duty to withdraw into herself, and to demand this respected by all in the vicinity. It bolsters up a person's self-esteem to know that five times a day one can demand a square metre's space and 3-4 minutes, during which no disturbance is allowed, not even from the naughtiest child; that in this space a person's spiritual side is isolated from its surroundings, yet at one with millions of others praising God, a unity that transcends race and horizon.

788 431 The duty to pay alms is the pillar of Islam most closely paralleled in our own society until social welfare took over most forms of private charity.

785 The fast, like the five daily prayers, is a method of being included in a great spiritual and religious fellowship. By rejecting oneself in the month of ramadan to the same physical deprivations and suffering as the rest adherents to Islam a feeling of solidarity, of affinity, is engendered.

788 [484] 781 562 For those fortunate to be able to make it, the pilgrimage is a form of foreign travel that has no counterpart elsewhere. Once more it means entering a great religious association, enduring with others the rigours of its journey and with them assuming a state of sanctity or initiation. The stay in Mecca constitutes a series of ecstatic experiences which women and men who have taken part in them never cease to talk about. These experiences set their mark on the soul and are later outwardly manifested by the clothing one referred to. In the five daily prayer periods, in the thirty days of the fast, and on the days of pilgrimage, women enter the great congregation of the orthodox on an equal footing with men. These events are such a break in the daily life that they must be considered a spiritual luxury, quite incompatible with the wretched life pattern of our industrialised community. The demands made by Islam on the time of the individual cannot be reconciled with our Western rhythm of life. In return, these demands give to daily life a spiritual content extremely difficult of replacement by anything else whatever. When even a hard-working housewife like the young woman I saw in Bukhara, whose daily work covered husband, child, house, mulberry plantation and the milking of goats twice daily in the mountains, felt that she had the right to take the time to say her daily prayers before preparing dough for bread making or before loading the heavy goatskin of water on her back, it must give her a feeling of human worth in the middle of her inhuman labours. She possessed the right and the duty to collect herself five times daily, to be silent and to consider spiritual matters, and nothing in the world could deprive her of this. It is not surprising that the Islamic Kurdish women conducted themselves with calm and dignity. So long as certain inviolable areas of time and thought exist for them, the dull drudgery will never be able to engulf them entirely.

---

841 *Underwear.* During menstruation the women in the educated and uneducated milieus in Sulaimani (from whom I gathered information) used home-made rectangular sanitary towels made out of several layers of cotton material with tapes at the four corners. The tapes were tied together two by two so that the towel was suspended from the woman's hips. The waist was not used as a support in any

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

539 [571] 293 562

Sure 24, verses 30-31 of the Coran are usually considered to form the religious basis for the complete veiling practised by Muslim women, supplemented by the recommendation, contained in Sure 33, verse 59, that the wives and daughters of the Faithful put on an over-garment when leaving the house in order that they shall be recognized as honest women. Sure 24, verses 30-31 runs: ("Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely *Allah* is aware of what they do). And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their headcoverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands, or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or the male servants not having need (of women), or the children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women; and let them not strike their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may be known; and turn to *Allah* all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful"[12].

293 [592] 562 199

It is maintained that the veiling of women was originally foreign to the Arabs and the prophet Mohammed[13], having been adopted by Islam after the prophet's death in 632 during the years of expansion in Syria and Mesopotamia. Here contact was made with the Hellenic-Byzantine empire where women led a secluded life, a custom preserved from ancient Greece. The veil was adopted as a mark of respectability as opposed to harlotry, and veiling was further extended, justifying this by reference to the two mentioned Suras of the Coran. By obtaining religious backing the veil and shawl or cowl, though varying somewhat in the different Islamic areas, became something quite different from any other clothing. It became a symbol of a religious idea and of a definite pattern of behaviour. By its anonymity, it gave women a liberty that no other dress could provide. It aroused a respect that can only be compared with that shown to a nun's habit. Unknown and unrecognizable, she in that dress represented something inviolate and protected. No man could demand to see the face hidden by the veil. Unseen, she was not only herself but also represented half the community, and in virtue of this she could demand consideration and the maintenance of certain privileges. She herself was able to see the one to whose she was speaking, but the reverse was not the case. Woodsmall[14] quotes various statements made by women who had been accustomed to wear, or still were, the veil. An Islamic woman from Alexandria says: "A veil ... presents strange paradoxes. It is a restrictive emphasis on sex relationship, and also on moral protection; a sign of utter dependence and also of freedom from responsibility; a handicap to real progress and a symbol of special privilege. In a word the veil represents an entirely different social system. Discarding it, therefore, involves a whole change of psychology impossible for a Western woman to understand ... so entirely foreign to you and so much a part of us ...".

[178]

562 293 565 484

Over-garment and veil were in use in all four feminine environments in Southern Kurdistan, but to very different extents. The women of the village aristocracy did not wear them in daily life, but only when visiting a town (see p. 78). They then wore them from the moment of leaving home until they returned. For the women it was thus a sign that they were leaving a village milieu to enter an urban environment. The same applied to women of the humble village milieu. "Many times in the *sûq* at Sulaimani I have been addressed by closely-veiled women, who, when they raised the veil, proved to

4: Hanaw E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kard MA11

he residents of Tepsawa, where I never saw them veiled. Nor did I ever observe them using the head cloth or the sleeves of the costume to cover the face even if there were male strangers in the vicinity, which Granqvist mentions as being a part of women's pattern of behaviour in Palestine[1].

On the other hand for both the educated and uneducated in the town the over-garment and veil was an indispensible part of women's dress outside the home. It was unthinkable that any woman in a town like Sebastiyeh or the smaller trading centre, Halabja, could leave the home, shut off completely from the street, without taking with them its exclusion in the form of the *abā'a-yāšī*. These two articles of clothing were obligatory for every girl from the age of 13-14. One of the adolescent daughters in the house of my interpreter had reached this age without it being realised until her father caught sight of her one day, when, clad in a far too tight, washed-out and very shrunk European summer dress, she was about to disappear through the street door, and at once sent one of the women in the house to the *sūq* to buy the necessary *abā'* and veil. The following day the girl had vanished forever from the town's street scene and an anonymous female figure appeared instead. Women of both the educated and uneducated urban milieu uphold the town practice of concealment when visiting villages. A sister of Sheikh Taffir of Tepsawa, a woman in her fifties, paid a long visit to her brother. She had brought in *abā'* and veil in order to walk from Tepsawa to another village in the neighbourhood. As nobody in this covering ever carried any burden, she was accompanied on this occasion by an 8 year old daughter of the house who walked behind her on the mountain track carrying a bundle containing gifts. On the day I engaged her, my interpreter arrived at Tepsawa closely veiled. She also brought with her by mule over the Chawtabend pass her black over-garment, and managed in some remarkable way to get this around her as, in the dusk, with a flock of sheep streaming past the legs of our riding animals like a dark flood, we entered the small village of Sargale nestling in a valley behind the mountains. She also sent her 13 year old brother, her invariable companion, back to to the Sheikh's house at Tepsawa to fetch her over-garment and veil when, returning from a visit to the neighbouring village of Rakawa, we discovered that in our absence male guests had been received on the loggia of the guest house. Apart from that she did not wear *abā'* and veil after the first day in the village. Town women thus took with them and used on isolated occasions in the villages the veil and over-garment worn in an urban milieu.

Distribution of veil types inside the four milieus.

Veil types	Village milieu		Nomadic village		Educated urban		Uneducated urban	
	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married
Triangular mask + shoulder veil tails		+		+		(+)		+
Head cloth	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Ordos bridal veil		?		+				?
European white bridal veil						+		
Face veil blank	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+	+	+

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

responsibility for religious education taken over by the leader of the local *Sheikh* family. On the other hand, an intelligent mullah, though often formalistic and introvert in his orientation, may play a considerable part in improving the intellectual and sanitary standard of the village (the subject of clean and unclean having importance in a religious context), but does not seem to attempt to extend his influence any wider. His high intellectual standard and foreign values tend to alienate him from the «petty squabbles» of the village; and an ambitious attitude has no real place in the piously fatalistic Islamic world view. To the extent he does not convert his status and prestige into a de-facto power position, the mullah might be said not to be fully integrated into the social structure of the village. He is similarly in no sense an indispensable resident in the village community — very frequently, he is called in only for funerals, naming ceremonies etc., or these functions may even be performed by a local derwish or *Sheikh*. The pattern of training blind boys, necessarily marginal to village society, as mullahs, may in part be related to an appreciation of this marginal position which the mullah occupies.

Hadji. The *Hadji*, on the other hand, is an ordinary member of the village community. His position is related to the scale of piety, and derives simply from having completed a pilgrimage to Mecca. The title, however, is one of considerable respect — in part because it also implicitly indicates high rating on the scale of wealth.

The whole institution of the pilgrimage is the result of the command by the Prophet Mohammed, that any man who has the necessary means to make the pilgrimage *and* support his family at home, or whose family is able to support itself without him, should once in his lifetime journey to the holy city of Mecca. Thus the title of *Hadji* indicates (a) a pious eagerness to follow the command of Mohammed, and (b) moderately prosperous circumstances. One rarely finds more than 3—4 *Hadjis* in any one village; these will tend to be at least *among* the leading members of their community.

Formerly, the initiative was individual and the journey hazardous, often achieved by relatively greater physical exertion and less expense, and the title of *Hadji* was thus less of a symbol of wealth than at present.

than at present. The route from the Suleimani area went by caravan to Basra in the Persian Gulf, by ship to Jiddah (or even by caravan across the Arabian peninsula) and on foot from Jiddah to Mecca — involving often more than a full year of travel. Today, the time expended is in the neighborhood of two months, travel being by bus to Baghdad and across to Beirut, ship through the Suez to Jiddah, and bus up to the walls of Mecca. Total expenses average some £ 200. The pattern is generally one of group travel — in 1948, a group of approximately 60 persons from the Suleimani area journeyed together.

The moral-religious status connected with the title of *Hadji* is of negligible importance. There is some feeling that in situations of petty conflict, a *Hadji* should attempt to mediate, and that higher moral standards are to be expected from him. More important is its connections with wealth as a type of conspicuous consumption, and in this it parallels the widely distributed type of honorific title dependent on having gone through a »pot-latch» series of feasts[1]). However, in the competitive and informal Kurdish village organization, the honorific title of *Hadji* is not by itself of any appreciable consequence in the de-facto power hierarchy, and must be supported by a continued position of relative wealth.

KINSHIP

In addition to the formal hierarchies governing the political, the economic, and the religious fields, there remains the field of kinship. It might be pointed out that the household organization, and attendant kinship obligations, described above pp. 29 ff, represents a hierarchical organization of basicly the same type, but relating to a unit smaller than the village, in contrast with the other, more extensive organizations. Needless to say, the patriarch of a large household gains prestige and is vested with de-facto power by

[1]) An example from a culturally and geographically parallel area is offered by the Kafirs of Afghanistan, where the whole social structure of the village community is based on a hierarchy of such honorific titles, attained by giving stipulated numbers of feasts (*cf. G. S. Robertson, 1896, pp. 434 ff.*).